

Dear EQC members,

Below please find Shawn Thomas' response to the questions raised by Representative White and Senator Lang.

Response begins--

On Representative White's comment. He did meet with our Forest Management Bureau staff to go over the rules. Why did we do one rulemaking effort vs. several smaller ones? Good question, I'm not sure we thought it through a lot. We've been identifying some confusion between commitments the Land Board made in the HCP and the ARM's for several years. Some of our field staff were asking for clarification on these issues, so we compiled them together with the changes required due to a couple bills from the last session to try and be efficient.

We've noted Rep. White's comment that he would have liked a different approach. We've since had a couple other similar comments during the process. We are going to evaluate the public comments in total over the next couple of weeks and decide how to move forward.

On Senator Lang's comment. Our proposed rule changes for Bull Trout management are limited to classified forest lands. There wouldn't be any implications to anything related to the Milk river project, and I don't think there are any TLMD classified forest lands near the length of the Milk river.

--Response ends.

Please let me know any additional questions you may have.

Best regards,

Joe Carroll